



# Sex and Relationships Education Policy

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## **1. DEFINITIONS**

- 1.1 “Group” – this refers to the AET Group made up of three academy trusts.
- 1.2 “Trust” – this refers to one of the three academy trusts, which make up the AET Group, namely, Academies Enterprise Trust, London Academies Enterprise Trust and Unity City Academy Trust.
- 1.3 “Board of Trustees” – this refers to the Group’s Board of Trustees, who have ultimate responsibility for governance.
- 1.4 “Local Governing Body” – this refers to the local governing body, which has delegated powers from the Board of Trustees in relation to governance for their academy. The members of the local governing body are the “local governors”.
- 1.5 “Management Board” – this refers to the management board, which also has delegated powers from the Board of Trustees in relation to governance for their academy. Management Boards are imposed for a time-limited period, where a local governing body has failed to support and challenge academy leaders effectively. Management Boards are chaired by a member of the Group’s Executive Board.
- 1.6 “Academy” – this refers to the individual academy.
- 1.7 “We/Us” – this refers to all employees and stakeholders within the AET Group.
- 1.8 “Department for Education” – this refers to the Government’s Department for Education”.
- 1.9 “Local Authority” – this refers to the academy’s local authority, based on its location within England. This may be a county, unitary authority, metropolitan borough or London borough.

## **2. POLICY STATEMENT**

- a) Legislation set in place by successive Education Acts indicates that it is the responsibility of the Trust to ensure that all pupils in its academies are offered the opportunity of receiving a comprehensive, well-planned programme of sex and relationships education during their school careers in fulfilment of the requirement of the Secretary of State’s 2000 guidance on Sex and Religious Education (“SRE”) Act 2011 and National Curriculum 2014 that the school curriculum should be one which:
  - i. promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the academy and of society
  - ii. prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- b) From September 1994, schools introducing changes incorporated in Sections 352 and 404 of the Education Act 1996, have the following legal powers and duties:
  - i. those responsible for governance must make a written statement of their policy on sex and relationships education available to parents/carers
  - ii. sex and relationships education (including education about abortion, Human

- Immunodeficiency Virus (“HIV”) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (“AIDS”) and other sexually-transmitted infections) must be provided for all registered pupils
- iii. sex and relationships education must be provided in such a manner as to encourage young people to have regard to moral considerations and the value of family life.
  - c) The Trust acknowledges its legal responsibilities and, in aiming to meet the requirements of the Secretary of State’s 2000 guidance on SRE Act 2011 and National Curriculum 2014, considers that appropriate sex and relationships education must be an important element in the curriculum of the academy in preparing pupils for adult life.
  - d) When SRE is taught in Key Stage 1 it is taught in a way to lay the foundations of understanding about growth and change and respect for one another.
  - e) When SRE is taught in Key Stage 2 it will prepare pupils for changes of puberty.
  - f) When sex (and relationships) education is taught as part of the National Curriculum Science course, it is treated in a factual way and deals with biological details of the reproductive system.
  - g) In Personal, Social and Health Education (“PSHE”), however, sex and relationships education is set in a moral framework, also considering emotional and psychological aspects and stressing the importance of behaving in a socially responsible way. It will also respect the cultural backgrounds of pupils.
  - h) The Trust and its academies also recognises that parents are the key figures in helping their children cope with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up and in preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities which sexual development brings. Sex and relationships education at our academies aims to be complementary and supportive of the role of parents/carers but our academies also recognise that some pupils may receive little or no “sex education” from their home. Our academies need to be responsive to this.

### **3. AIMS OF SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION**

- a) The aims of the Sex and Relationships Education are:
  - i. to provide objective information about the physical, emotional, moral and social aspects of human sexual development
  - ii. to prepare pupils to deal effectively with changes they will experience during puberty and adolescence and to cope with the challenges they will face as adults
  - iii. to prepare pupils for the roles they will assume in adult relationships and parenthood by helping them to acquire the knowledge and skills relevant to these areas, particularly when using technology or social networks
  - iv. to prepare pupils to view their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner and to enable them to recognise the risks of certain types of sexual behaviour
  - v. to assist pupils to develop and clarify a personal set of values and attitudes which will support them in their decision making in the present and in the future
  - vi. to assist pupils to understand about the nature and importance of marriage for family life and bringing up children
  - vii. to encourage pupils to consider the importance of self-restraint, dignity and

- respect for themselves and others, acceptance of responsibility, sensitivity towards the needs and views of others, loyalty and fidelity
- viii. to develop pupils' self-esteem and self-improvement, encouraging pupils to view themselves in positive terms.

- b) The above aims should take account of, and be appropriate to the age and stage of development of, the pupil.

#### **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- a) It is the responsibility of the Trust to establish a policy and procedure for sex and relationships education and to monitor the effects of the procedure.
- b) It is the responsibility of the headteacher to promote an ethos of mutual respect in relationships and ensure that sex and relationships education is provided as part of the curriculum which prepares pupils for adult life.
- c) It is the responsibility of all staff to familiarise themselves, and comply, with this policy and procedure in accordance with relevant professional standards.

#### **5. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- a) The designated member of staff will report on the Policy to the headteacher as appropriate.
- b) The headteacher will report to the local governing body on any relevant aspects of the working of the Policy as appropriate

#### **6. CORE PROCEDURES**

##### **6.1 Organisation of Sex and Relationships Education**

In order to deliver the three main elements of Sex and Relationships Education ie attitudes and values, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding, the organisation of Sex and Relationship Education in the academy is as follows:

Teacher with responsibility for planning, for example, the Personal, Social and Health Education ("PSHE") Co-ordinator.

Exemplar delivery of the programme (for example):

- In Key Stage 1 - class teacher
- In Key Stage 2 - class teacher and school nurse
- In Key Stage 3 - the form tutor
- In Key Stage 4 - the "Skills for Life" Team.

Training Provision: academy-based training; the local National Health Service (NHS) Primary Care Trust (PCT) and its support staff for training in the academy.

As part of sex and relationship education, pupils should be taught about the nature and importance of marriage for family life and bringing up children, recognising that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside marriage. Therefore pupils should learn the significance of marriage and stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society. Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no

stigmatisation of pupils based on their home or cultural circumstances.

Information should be presented in a factual, unbiased way and controversial issues handled with sensitivity so that pupils are given information enabling them to make healthy decisions.

Resources used and criteria for selection: video, worksheets, and information leaflets from the advisory services.

Review and evaluation of the programme: should take place regularly. The PSHE Co-ordinator uses such information to amend the programme accordingly.

Specific classroom arrangements: pupils are taught in their mixed gender groups unless the topic requires single sex groupings.

## **6.2 Issues of Confidentiality**

It is important to distinguish between the academy's function of providing education generally about sexual matters and, on the other, counselling and advice to individual pupils on these issues, particularly if it relates to their own sexual behaviour.

The Sex and Relationship Guidance 2000 states that:

- i. there may be cases where a teacher learns from an under 16 year old that they are having, or contemplating having, sexual intercourse. In these circumstances, schools ought to be in a position to take steps to ensure that:
  - a. wherever possible, the young person is persuaded to talk to their parent/ carer
  - b. any child protection issues are addressed
  - c. that the child has been adequately counselled and informed about contraception, including precise information about where young people can access contraception and advice services.
- ii. When the teacher who receives the information believes there is a child protection issue to be addressed, they should refer the case to a designated teacher for child protection. They should also make clear to the pupil that they cannot guarantee confidentiality. The teacher should ensure that the pupil understands that if confidentiality has to be broken they will be informed first.
- iii. It is only in the most exceptional case that schools should be in the position of having to handle such information without parental knowledge, and where younger pupils were involved this would be grounds for serious concern. headteachers and governors should monitor the frequency of such cases.

In practice, if pupils ask for individual advice, teachers:

- i. should encourage pupils to discuss their concerns with their parents/carers
- ii. should tell pupils where to seek confidential advice and information as appropriate
- iii. can themselves give advice to pupils who have not been withdrawn from sex education, within the boundaries of their own professional role
- iv. should not promise pupils confidentiality
- v. should use discretion to keep disclosures made to them confidential, if, in the teacher's professional judgement, this is in the pupil's best interest

- vi. are not obliged to break confidentiality; they can only be instructed by the headteacher to do so.

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### **6.3 Parental withdrawal of their children from Sex and Relationships Education**

- Parents/carers have a right to withdraw their children from sex and relationships education (excluding that contained in the compulsory science National Curriculum) and discussion of sexual matters which arises incidentally in lessons outside the planned sex and relationships education programmes.
- Subject to the headteacher's power to direct, teachers are not obliged to inform parents/carers where pupils seek individual advice about sexual matters, but can maintain confidentiality if, in their professional judgment, this would be in the pupil's best interest.
- Merely informing a pupil of where he/she can seek confidential advice is not sex education. Teachers can give such information to pupils who have been withdrawn.
- Parents/carers requesting withdrawal will be invited to discuss their concerns with the PSHE Co-ordinator or a senior member of staff, though there is no obligation for them to do so. It is hoped that, in most cases, explanation or a minor modification may assure them that the programme is suitable for their children.
- Parents/carers still wishing to withdraw their children should make this request in writing to the headteacher, following which alternative arrangements may be made for the teaching or supervision of them.
- Dialogue between the academy and parents/carers will remain open and parents will be informed of future sex and relationships education lessons so that they may revoke their request at a later date should they wish to do so.